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PROPOSED FOR

OF

REGISTER FOR BALANCE



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110. l. 251.



P R E F A C E

IT is unnecessary to dwell upon the utility of entries in parish registers, as well as carefully preservation of them.

This most wise and beneficial regulation is first introduced in the year 1538, by the direction then vicar-general; before which time, probably clergy were not often sufficient penmen to keep nor were there at this period excisemen who could act as amanuenses.

The great convenience arising from this ordinance, well's, occasioned its being further enjoined during the reigns of Edward VI. Q. Elizabeth, and James I.

I take this from bishop Gibson's Codex, though the collection of Injunctions, printed in 1684, 4to. I do not mention of this regulation during the reign of Q. Elizabeth, however, a register was enjoined by Edward VI. and for neglect in so doing, the minister is mulcted to the poor's box, whilst in the same year it makes mention of the minister's articles of visitation to the province of Canterbury. A canon of 1603 directs registers to be made up from the *first taking place*, i. e. A. D. 1538, and more particularly the first year of Q. Elizabeth, which last injunction shew, that before that period they were either not kept or very imperfectly kept.

The civil wars during the next reign often prevented ministers from executing regularly this part of their duty. It seems also to have been greatly neglected during the reign of Charles II. though in the year 1653 an ordinance was made, that the parishioners, contributing to the relief

ide a book of velum or parchment, which was to be person chosen by the said parishioners every three who was to make the proper entries of marriages, burials.

Restoration, registers seem to have been again at- and possibly by the injunctions of the bishops at their

the reign of K. William, the first parliamentary no- of them; though the object of the legislature is urage this most useful evidence, but to raise supplies on the war with France.

d 7 Will. III. c. 6. S. xxiv. every clergyman is to ter of births, burials, and baptisms, under a penalty

l 8 Will. III. c. 35. S. v. every parent is to give no- birth of their child within five days, under a penalty d the same penalty is extended to the parish mini- st making an entry of the child thus born and not

y 4 Anne, c. 12. S. x. the clergyman is indemnified enalty of 100*l.* imposed by 6 and 7 Will. III. in case upon christenings, births, and burials, shall have been

tanding, however, these different injunctions from Henry VIII. parish registers are not yet kept as they which seems to arise from the following causes.

n of the book for this purpose hath hitherto been ge- above four inches wide, in which there were no pro- is for separating the entries as to births, marriages, besides which, the book was often paged with parch- which material few can write distinctly.

t objection to this same book was, that it contained eaves, so that it was worn, or much thumbed and ef- re it was written out *.

egister is in this condition, a fair copy should be transcribed at the expence of 1 should be properly attested by the minister and churchwardens. The original, be preserved as long as it will hang together, or is at all legible.

It

It is supposed, that the present form of a register is liable to any of these defects, as the pages are small and the material good paper for writing; no more than 100 pages, whilst there are differences in marriages and burials *, from want of which separation of the entries hath frequently been occasioned.

As this register must necessarily fall into the hands of parochial clergy, it may not be improper to say with regard to church-yards, the care of which should be attended to, either by the bishops or archdeacons; or at least the necessary injunctions (if they are carried into proper execution.

The first, and perhaps principal use of this register is to record marriages †; but the soil is so covered with weeds, and the new-raised graves, that the tomb-stone of the deceased is overgrown and proached, much less can the inscription be read.

This arises, first, from the mould being so deep, which occupied the space where the coffin is deposited, and is left to be covered by the seeds of every weed that is wafted that way. Whereas the turf, taken from the grave, should be replaced as it grew before, or raised into a hillock, should be scattered in other parts of the church-yard, which may be done.

It may be said, indeed, that in a course of time the turf will rot, and the surface over it consequently raised; easy is it, when this happens, to bring the surface of the earth from new graves, or from the neighbouring church-yard.

Another cause of the church-yard being so covered with weeds, is occasioned by the clergyman's horse being kept there, which do not bite the grass sufficiently to prevent this objection, they tread the graves in by their hoofs, and often soon after the corpse is interred. The church-yard should only be depastured by sheep, which will keep the grass short.

* For large parishes, it will be very easy to add any number of pages. As for marriages, a proper book for entering them is already published by the marriage-act took place.

† It is said, that an act hath lately passed in Ireland, which requires that the body of the church should be depastured by sheep.

a fine turf, whilst the coffins would long resist the air bodies.

use of the church-yards being in this slovenly want of a proper height and sufficient repair in the inclosure, so that the heavy beasts of others often

lects, with regard to a more decent state of the it is imagined, may be remedied by the bishops and in the visitations of their diocese; but the additions of improvement are perhaps more proper for the more substantial inhabitants of the parish.

ould be, for the health and rational amusement of others, a dry walk all round the verge of the church—there is no porch to the church, there should be a paved and infirm. The paths also to the church from the church should be made good, and, where stiles are necessary ones should be provided at the expence of the parish. The young and strong may laugh possibly at this proposition, to be procured at so small a charge, is necessary for the invalid, or more advanced in years.

1, that the clergyman of every parish will, at the year, cast up the baptisms and burials, from which it may be seen, whether the inhabitants increase or decrease. Inquiries, indeed, made in different parts of the parish may be pronounced, that there is no foundation for the apprehensions of many writers on this head.

It is thought right to leave six pages at the end, two of which contain an alphabetical index *, to facilitate searches; and for any parochial event, of which it may not be proper to give some specimens.

— of this year, the spire of the church was struck by lightning, and it was most completely repaired by the munificence of B. lord of the manor ———.”

It was so cheap during the present year, that it sold for less than a bushel.”

facilitates searches, but may often prevent the article inquired after from

“ So

" So great a flood happened on ———, that t
———; and, for want of a graduated post
parliament, A. B. was drowned in passing the

" This year all the roads of the parish were t
so as to be very good for carriages, under the
who for several years had taken upon himself
ing surveyor, in order to accomplish this nece

" On ——— was buried A. B. of this par
gifter appears to have been 103 years of age.
—— accident ——."

" On ——— was buried C. D. of this . I
fame wife had 17 children, all of which are 1

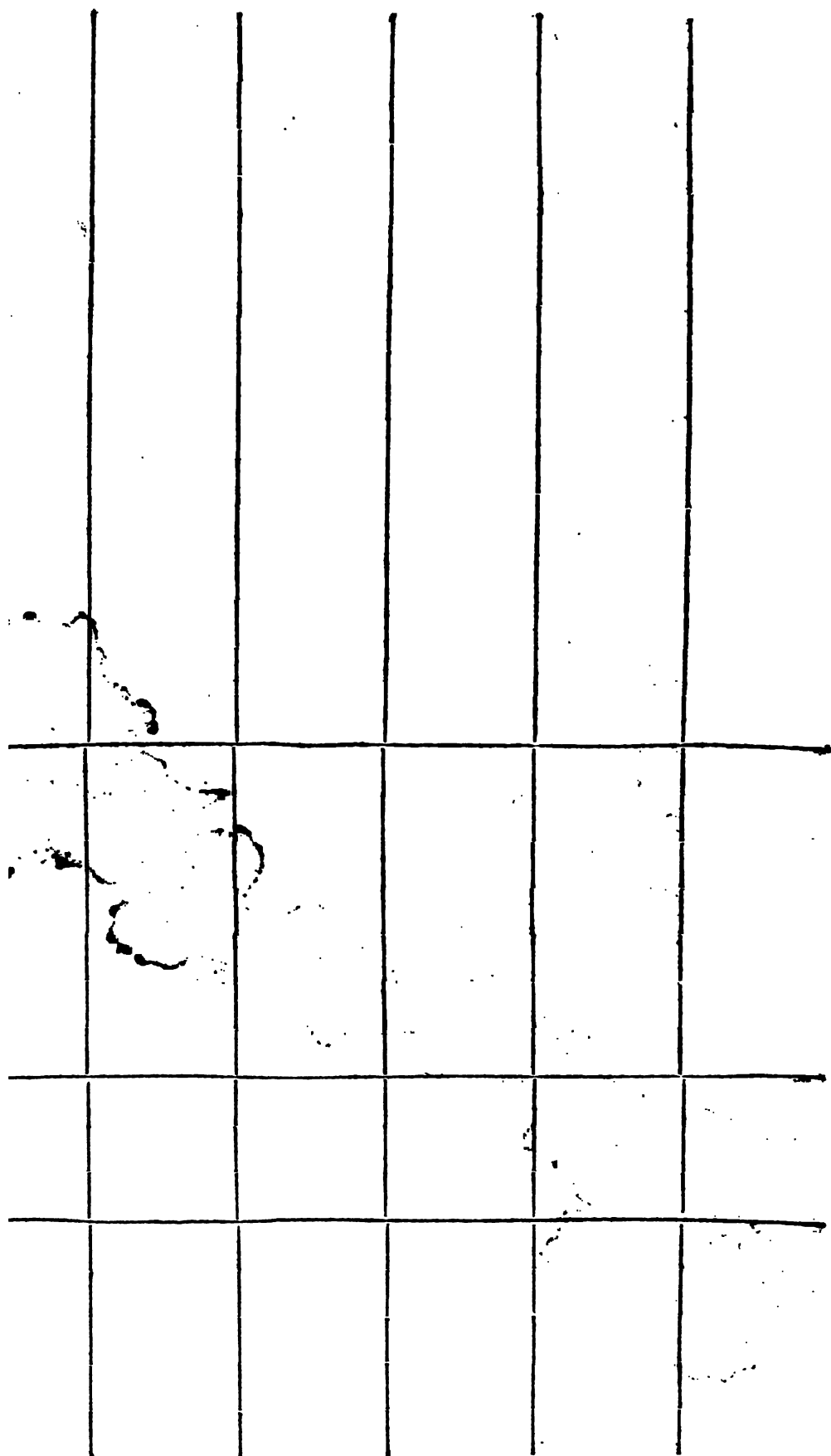
" —— This year the wall of the parish oh
roughly repaired."

" The bishop of the diocese confirmed in t
—— 400 persons of both sexes; which e
of the last confirmation by ——."

" This year a sickness prevailed in the parish
—— burials within a fortnight."

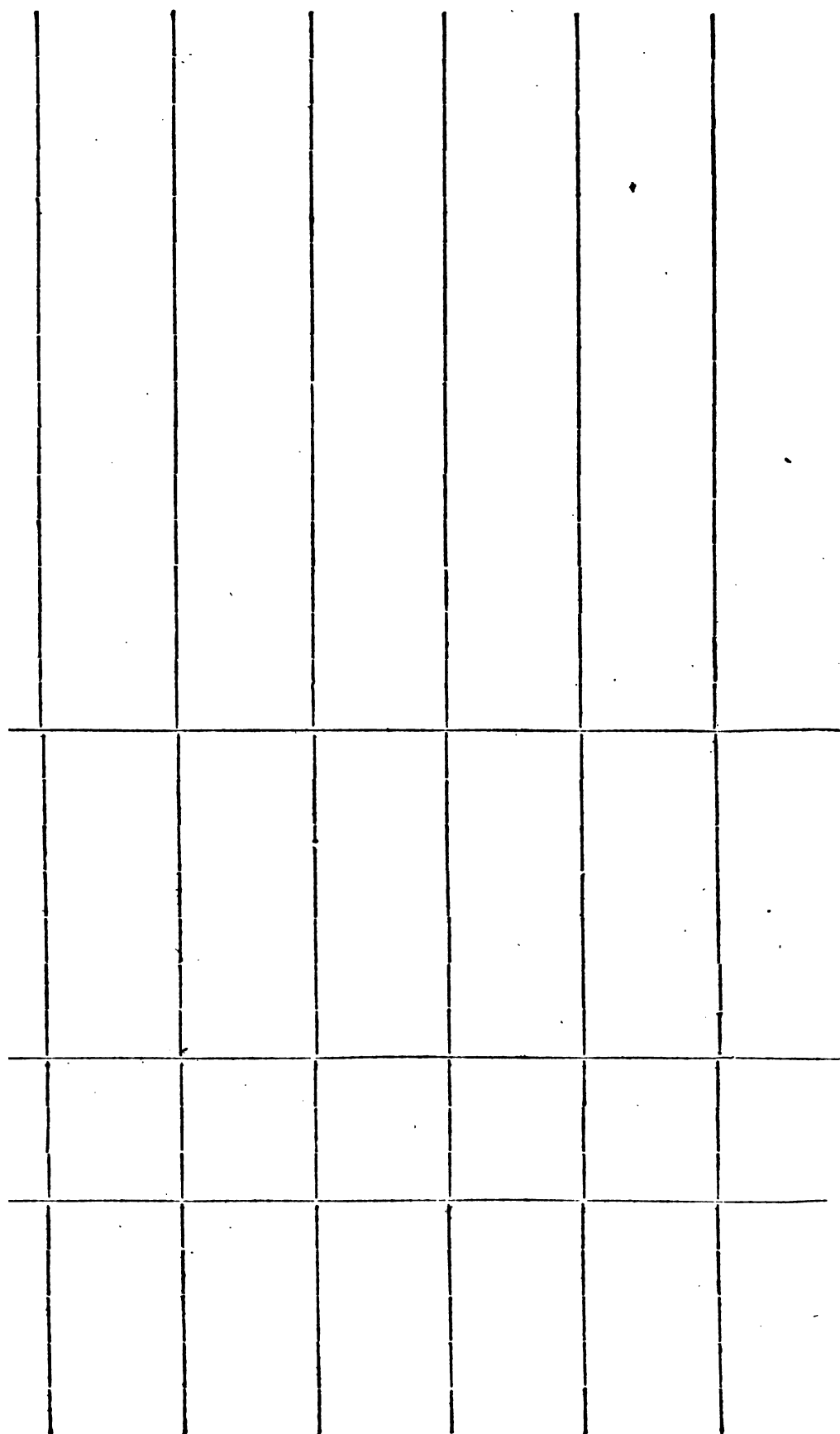
" A frost continued from —— to ——
&c."

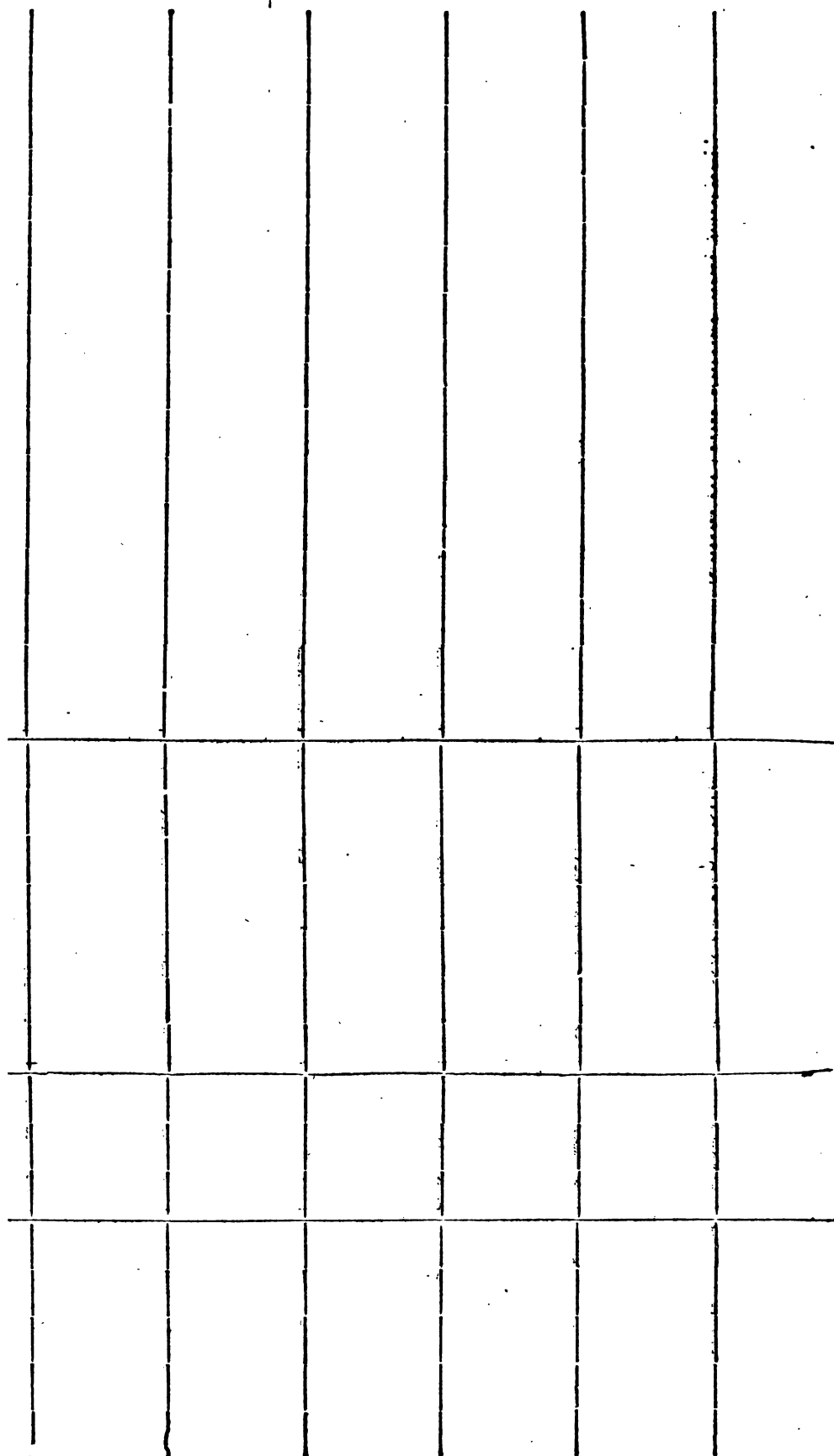
Such or like memoranda will in time, per
siderably interesting to the parishioners of t
tury, whilst the making the entry cannot be
blesome, even by the most indolent.



B A P T I S M S.

Date.	Aged.	Name of the Child.	Names of the Father and Mother.





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M E M O R A

MEMORANDA.

MEMORANDA

M E M O R A N D A .

F I N I S .



R E G I S T E R

F O R

A P T I S M S.

R E G I S T E R

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